

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 16405 01 OF 03 231942Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSY-02 ACDA-12 /080 W
-----091506 232040Z /73

R 231905Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1959
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 PARIS 16405

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, FR
SUBJECT: THE LEFT RADICALS OPT FOR MODERNITY

SUMMARY. THE LEFT RADICAL (MRG) CONGRESS OF MAY 20-21 LIVED UP TO ITS ADVANCE BILLING AS A LIVELY AFFAIR, AND THEN SOME -- A DEPUTY SCUFFLING IN THE AISLE WITH A DELEGATE OF A DIFFERING OPINION, THE HONORARY PRESIDENT FORCED TO LEAVE THE PODIUM IN THE FACE OF INSULTS FROM THE FLOOR, FREQUENT SHOUTS OF "LIAR", "TRAITOR" AND THE LIKE DIRECTED AT NUMEROUS SPEAKERS. THE TURMOIL ENDED WITH A SURPRISINGLY EASY VICTORY BY MICHEL CREPEAU AS PRESIDENT OF THE MRG, HANDILY DEFEATING THE FAVORED JACQUES MAROSELLI, THE CANDIDATE SUPPORTED BY OUTGOING LEADER ROBERT FABRE AS WELL AS THE PARTY'S POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY. IN SELECTING CREPEAU, DEPUTY AND DYNAMIC MAYOR OF LA ROCHELLE, THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 16405 01 OF 03 231942Z

MRG OPTED FOR CONTINUED COOPERATION WITH THE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) RATHER THAN THE "STRICT AUTONOMY" (READ DRIFT TOWARD THE CENTER) PROMISED BY MAROSELLI. OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE MRG'S ANSWER TO MICHEL ROCARD, CREPEAU CLEARLY REPRESENTED THE MODERN, MORE INNOVATIVE FORCES IN THE PARTY AS OPPOSED TO MAROSELLI'S TRADITIONALISM. THE IMPACT OF THE CONGRESS ON MRG UNITY IS NOT YET

CLEAR, BUT THE PARTY HAS CHOSEN THE ONE NATIONAL FIGURE WHO COULD HOPE TO REVERSE ITS SLOW DESCENT TOWARD POLITICAL OBLIVION. END SUMMARY.

1. LEFT RADICALS STAY LEFT: THE LEFT RADICAL CONGRESS IN PARIS MAY 20-21 PRODUCED A NEW PRESIDENT, MICHEL CREPEAU, AND WITH HIM, RATIFICATION OF A POLICY OF CONTINUED ALLIANCE ON THE FRENCH LEFT. ALTHOUGH ALL FACTIONS OF THE PARTY AGREED TIME AND AGAIN THAT THE MRG MUST REMAIN "ANCHORED IN THE LEFT", THERE WAS LITTLE DOUBT THAT JACQUES MAROSELLI'S (FORMER DEPUTY, MAYOR OF LUXEUIL) CALL FOR TOTAL LEFT RADICAL AUTONOMY WAS IN REALITY AN EFFORT TO MOVE THE MRG TOWARD A CENTER-OPPOSITION ROLE, A STRATEGY WHICH HAS CONSISTENTLY LED TO EVENTUAL INTEGRATION INTO THE PRESIDENTIAL MAJORITY UNDER THE FIFTH REPUBLIC. CREPEAU LIKEWISE BACKED THE NEED FOR PARTY INDEPENDENCE, BUT ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF A LEFT ALLIANCE WHERE THE GENERAL GOOD OF THE LEFT MAY SOMETIMES REQUIRE CLOSER COOPERATION WITH THE PS.

2. CENTRIST STRATEGY REJECTED: CALLING CREPEAU A "CRYPTO-SOCIALIST," MAROSELLI SELDOM ROSE ABOVE SIMPLE DEMAGOGUERY IN ATTEMPTING TO CAPITALIZE ON THE STRONG ANTI-PS SYMPATHIES WHICH THE RECENT ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN HAD AROUSED, CALLING FOR THREE FIRM COMMITMENTS:

-- A SEPARATE MRG LIST FOR THE JUNE 1979 EUROPEAN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 16405 01 OF 03 231942Z

PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS;

-- A LEFT RADICAL CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL
CONTEST OF 1981;

-- WITHDRAWAL OF ALL MRG DEPUTIES FROM THE PS
PARLIAMENTARY GROUP.

THE LAST PROPOSAL WAS TOTALLY OPPORTUNISTIC, AN EFFORT TO PROFIT FROM THE TRADITIONAL ANTI-PARLIAMENTARIAN SENTIMENT SHARED BY MANY GRASS-ROOTS ACTIVISTS IN THE WAKE OF ELECTORAL FAILURE, WHILE THE OTHER TWO WENT MORE TO THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM: DRAWING THE MRG AWAY FROM THE SOCIALISTS AND ALMOST INEVITABLY TOWARD THE CENTER-RIGHT AS ALLIANCES WOULD BE SOUGHT WITH SUCH PARTNERS AS THE RADICAL SOCIALISTS OR JOBERT'S MOUVEMENT DES DEMOCRATES.

3. THE MRG AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: CREPEAU PROVED THE PRAGMATIC POLITICIAN IN REBUTTING MAROSELLI'S DEMANDS, CANDIDLY POINTING OUT THE MAJOR DISADVANTAGES OF BEING NON-ALIGNED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY (NO REPRESENTATION ON COMMISSIONS, LITTLE SPEAKING TIME, ETC.) AND DECLARING THAT IT IS SIMPLY TOO EARLY TO MAKE FIRM COMMITMENTS ON THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT OR THE PRESIDENCY.

THE MRG MUST EVALUATE ITS CHANCES OF MAKING THE FIVE
PERCENT CUTOFF FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT BEFCRE OPTING

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 16405 02 OF 03 231955Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSY-02 ACDA-12 /080 W
-----091639 232040Z /73

R 231905Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1960
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 PARIS 16405

FOR ITS OWN LIST; OTHERWISE, A JOINT PS/MRG SLATEIGHT
PROVE MORE ADVANTAGEOUS. (A PS SOURCE TOLD US PRIVATELY
THAT MRG DEPUTY MAURICE FAURE HAS ALREDY BEEN OFFERED
ONE OF THE FIRST 18 SPOTS ON THE SOCIALIST LIST, I.E.,
ONE OF THE SPOTS CONSIDERED A SURE THING).

4. TOWARD A MODERN PARTY: BEYOND THE ISSUE OF POLITI-
CAL ORIENTATION, THE MAROSELLI-CREPEAU CONTEST WAS JUST
AS CLEARLY ONE OF TRADITION VERSUS MODERNITY. MAROSEL-
LI'S MAY 20 SPEECH WAS CRITICIZED EVEN BY HIS OWN
SUPPORTERS AS SOMETHING OUT OF THE THIRD REPUBLIC, HIS
REFERENCES TO GREAT RADICALS OF THE PAST DRAWING MORE
LAUGHTER THAN APPLAUSE. CREPEAU, MEANWHILE, DREW HEAVI-
LY ON HIS EXCELLENT RECORD AS THE CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE
MAYOR OF LA ROCHELLE, CASTING HIMSELF AS MN OF IDES
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 16405 02 OF 03 231955Z

READY TO BRING THE MRG INTO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY WITH NEW ORGANIZATION AND NEW PROGRAMS. MODERNLY WON HANDILY AS CREPEAU RECEIVED AN AMAZING 772 FIRST-ROUND VOTE TO ONLY 499 FOR MAROSELLI AND 98 FOR THE NTI-PARIS ANTI-LEADERSHIP CANDIDATE JACQUES LEVY.

5. THE DECLINE OF ROBERT FABRE: CREPEAU'S VICTORY WAS ALL THE MORE SURPRISING IN THAT IT CAME IN THE FACE OF THE OPPOSITION OF MRG FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT ROBERT FABRE, WHO LIKEWISE BROUGHT TO BEAR THE PARTY'S POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY ON MAROSELLI'S BEHALF. BUT FROM THE OPENING GAVEL, IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT ELECTORAL FAILURE LASTMARCH HAD REDUCED THE ONCE ALL-POWERFUL FABRE TO NEARLY THE ROLE OF ELDER STATESMAN. BY CONGRESS' END, HE WAS FORCED TO SWALLOW THE BITTER PILL OF CONGRATULATING THE MAN WHOM HE HAD ADAMANTLY OPPOSED AND WHO REPRESENTED A POLITICAL FUTURE FOR THE MRG AT ODDS WITH HIS OWN CONCEPT. FABRE'S POSITION WAS DIFFICULT FROM THE BEGINNING, TRYING TO DEFEND FIVE YEARS OF LEADERSHIP BASED ON THE UNION OF THE LEFT WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY SUPPORTING A CANDIDATE WHO IMPLICITLY RENOUNCED THAT STRATEGY. ALTHOUGH CLEARLY STILL MUCH RESPECTED BY ALL FACTIONS OF THE PARTY, FABRE'S UNIFYING CAPACITY DIED A QUICK AND OBVIOUS DEATH ON MAY 20.

6. A CROSS-FIRE OF CRITICISM: FABRE AND OTHER LEADERS AS WELL WERE CAUGHT FROM THE START IN A MAZE OF POLITICAL BATTLES, THE CONTEST FOR THE PRESIDENCY BEING ONLY FIRST AMONG MANY. THE CANDIDACY OF JACQUES LEVY, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS AGAIN NOTHING MORE THAN DEMAGOGUERY, AN ATTEMPTED EXPLOITATION OF THE RESENTMENT AT THE GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL OF BEING INSUFFICIENTLY CONSULTED, THE ETERNAL DEMAND FOR MORE "INTERNAL DEMOCRACY." LEVY BECAME

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 16405 02 OF 03 231955Z

THE "PEOPLE'S CANDIDATE," TELLING THE RANK-AND-FILE THAT THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS WAS TO LEARN ONCE AGAIN TO BE DISRESPECTFUL OF PARTY LEADERSHIP, BUT PRESENTING NO POSITIVE PLATFORM WHATSOEVER. OTHER THEMES INCLUDED THE TRADITIONAL ANTAGONISMS BETWEEN PARIS AND THE PROVINCES AND BETWEEN THE MRG STRONGHOLD IN THE SOUTHWEST AND THE REST OF THE PARTY AS WELL AS THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ELECTED OFFICIALS AND GRASS-ROOTS ACTIVISTS.

7. THIS COMBINATION OF CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES PRODUCED

A CONGRESS WHICH CAN ONLY BE TERMED TUMULTUOUS. IN TRUE RADICAL TRADITION, SPOKESMEN SPARED NO ONE IN LAUNCHING PERSONAL ATTACKS BY NAME AGAINST ALL ELEMENTS OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP; NOR WERE SPEAKERS SPARED THE BARBED WRATH OF DISAPPROVING DELEGATES. AFTER DRIVING HONORARY PARTY PRESIDENT MAURICE FAURE FROM THE PODIUM WITH CHANTS OF "BOUGHT OFF" (REFERRING TO HIS CHANGING POLITICAL ALLIANCES OF YEARS PAST), THE FOLLOWING SPEAKER PROCLAIMED THE CONGRESS WORTHWHILE IN THAT HE HAD NOW SEEN MAURICE FAURE LEAVE THE TRIBUNE OF A RADICAL CONGRESS. ROBERT FABRE HIMSELF BEGAN THE PROCESS ON MAY 20, CRITICIZING HIS OPPONENTS CREPEAU AND JEAN-DENIS BREDIN BY NAME IN AN ATTEMPT TO JUSTIFY HIS POST-ELECTION BEHAVIOR (CALLING THE MRG RELEASED FROM ITS OBLIGATIONS TO THE UNION OF THE LEFT), AND NEVER DID THE DISCUSSION SERIOUSLY FOCUS ON THE REAL POLICY CHOICES FOR THE FUTURE, EVEN THOUGH CREPEAU MADE AN HONEST EFFORT TO ELEVATE THE TONE OF THE CONGRESS.

8. POLITICAL IMPACT: IN MANY WAYS, THE MRG HAS ENTERED A NEW ERA. MICHEL CREPEAU HAS A DEMONSTRATED FLAIR FOR THE NEW AND UNUSUAL AND CAN BE COUNTED ON TO SHAKE UP PARTY ORGANIZATION. HE WILL GIVE MORE ATTENTION TO THE PARTY'S RANK-AND-FILE BY EXPANDING THE ROLE OF THE DIRECTING COMMITTEE, BUT HE WILL ALSO CREATE A SMALL,

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PARIS 16405 02 OF 03 231955Z

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 16405 03 OF 03 232016Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
TRSY-02 ACDA-12 /080 W
-----091816 232039Z /73
R 231905Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1961

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL NICE
AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 PARIS 16405

HOMOGENEOUS NATIONAL SECRETARIAT WHICH WILL BE MORE
AMBITIOUS AND HARD-DRIVING THAN FABRE'S LOOSELY CONTROL-
LED GENERAL STAFF. CREPEAU IS A MAN OF IMAGINATION WHO,
AS MAYOR, HAS BROUGHT QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES, SUCH AS
THE ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND TRANSPORTATION, TO THE
FOREFRONT OF PUBLIC ATTENTION AND WILL NOW TRY TO MOUNT
A SIMILAR EFFORT ON THE NATIONAL FRONT.

9. IN OTHER WAYS, THE MRG REMAINS WHAT IT WAS, A PARTY
OF THE LEFT. IT IS NOW LESS LIKELY THAT THE MRG WILL
PRESENT EITHER A SEPARATE LIST FOR THE EUROPEAN PARLIA-
MENT (UNLESS BY SOME MAGIC THE FIVE PERCENT BARRIER BE-
COMES ATTAINABLE), OR A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY;
IT WILL THUS BRING ITS SUPPORT ONCE AGAIN TO THE PS.
FOR THE SOCIALISTS, MRG RENEWAL CUTS TWO WAYS. WHILE NO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 16405 03 OF 03 232016Z

DOUBT PLEASED THAT ITS ALLY CHOSE TO STICK FIRMLY BY ITS
LEFT ORIENTATION, THUS STRENGTHENING THE PLURALISTIC
APPEAL OF THE NON-COMMUNIST LEFT, THE PS NOW FACES THE
PROSPECT OF CONTINUED COMPETITION FOR THE MODERATE LEFT-
CENTER VOTE, SOMETHING IT MIGHT HAVE HAD ALL TO ITSELF
IF THE MRG HAD DECIDED TO MOVE TOWARD THE RIGHT. THE
SOCIALISTS MIGHT HAVE PREFERRED TO ABSORB DISAFFECTED
LEFT-WING MRG LEADERS LIKE CREPEAU AND FAURE, LEAVING
MAROSELLI TO CREATE A POLITICAL GAP WHICH ONLY THE PS
COULD FILL.

10. THE STRENGTH OF THE NEW MRG IS FAR FROM CERTAIN, AS
MONEYMAN MANUEL DIAZ HAS WITHDRAWN HIS SUPPORT AND
OTHER RIGHT-WING MAROSELLI ELEMENTS HAVE ALREADY DECI-
DED TO CREATE A NEW RADICAL "CLUB", WHILE REMAINING
WITHIN THE MRG. (DIAZ, WHO OWNS THE CURRENT MRG OFFICE
COMPLEX, HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THESE FACILITIES WILL NOW
BECOME THE HEADQUARTERS FOR THE "CLUB," LEAVING CREPEAU
TO FIND NEW OFFICES FOR THE PARTY). A FORMAL SCISSION
IN THE PARTY HAS BEEN AVOIDED FOR THE MOMENT, IF ONLY

BECAUSE ALL CANDIDATES WERE PUBLICLY PLEDGED TO CONTINUED UNITY DURING THE CONGRESS. THE RADICAL "CLUB"AY WELL SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR EXPANDED CONTACTS WITH THE RADICAL SOCIALISTS AND OTHER CENTRIST FORCES, ALL IN THE NAME OF "DIALOGUE", BUT EVEN MAROSELLI SUPPORTERS HAVE LITTLE LOVE FOR JEAN-JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER AND WILL NOT BE EAGER TO ASSOCIATE TOO CLOSELY WITH HIS MOVEMENT.

1. THE END RESULT IS LITTLE CHANGE ON THE POLITICAL SCENE, EVEN IN THE WAKE OF THE LEGISLATIVE "DISASTER" AND A RIOTOUS CONGRESS. THE ELYSEE, HOWEVER, MUST BE PLEASED AT THE HIGH DEGREE OF TENSION WITHIN THE MRG, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 16405 03 OF 03 232016Z

BELIEVING THAT THE INEVITABLE BREAK HAS ONLY BEEN POSTPONED. NONETHELESS, CREPEAU HAS BEEN GIVEN HIS CHANCE TO RENOVATE THE PARTY AND WILL MAKE THE MOST OF IT. HE IS A MAN OF ACTION WHO BELIEVES IN THE IRRESISTIBLE FORCE OF NEW IDEAS. THE LEFT FAILED IN 1978, HE SAYS, BY TALKING TOO MUCH ABOUT THE QUANTITATIVE ASPECTS OF THE ECONOMY AND POLITICS AND BY NEGLECTING THE ISSUES THAT REALLY COUNT -- THE HUMAN ELEMENTS, HAPPINESS AND MORALITY. THE MRG, ADMITTEDLY A SMALL-FRY IN THE POLITICAL POT, WILL NOW WAGE A COMMANDO EFFORT ON THOSE KEY ISSUES IN KEEPING WITH ITS RESOURCES RATHER THAN TRYING TO COMPETE AS A POLITICAL ARMY WHICH IT IS NOT. HARTMAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARTY MEETINGS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PARIS16405
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780217-0869
Format: TEL
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780529/aaaaaycx.tel
Line Count: 364
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4f8e4698-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2602903
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE LEFT RADICALS OPT FOR MODERNITY SUMMARY. THE LEFT RADICAL (MRG) CONGRESS OF MAY 20-21 LIVED UP TO ITS ADVANCE BILLING AS A LIVELY AFFAIR
TAGS: PINT, FR, MRG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4f8e4698-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014